

lines and vindictive editorials created and published by some of the subscribers of the United Press International, since February 6th, 1963, to discern the motive for this evil design, and to recognize evidence of concerted action amounting to a conspiracy to harass, humiliate, ridicule, lampoon, punish, and, if possible, to destroy the usefulness of the one they hold solely responsible for their displeasure—and I seem to be the chosen target of their frenzied and reckless effort.

And now—to make the nectar of the intellectual sadism which nourishes them more sweet—they seek also to destroy a fine young man and his wife, yet hardly more than children—to “destroy” them on the threshold of their lives—and for what transgression, save that of being my son and my daughter-in-law?

I have often heard it said, “You can’t beat the press—it always has the last word.” I do not challenge that statement. Our people are becoming more and more helpless in their fear of the abuse of the power of the press. There are many who resent the corruption of freedom of the press into license which is rampant today, but few are they who are willing to risk the threatened or real destruction of themselves and their families by powerful, ruthless, irresponsible and vindictive units of the press. We have no more protection from the cunning abuse and misuse of the power of the press by some newspapers than the Belgians had against Hitler’s tanks. This fact is deplored by many honorable newspaper men and honorable members of other news media, including radio and television—and though they valiantly endeavor to stem the tide, they are hopelessly outnumbered or overpowered by greater circulation.

The effort to destroy me or to impair my usefulness in this Body was launched many weeks ago. I have quite enough to do without engaging in a controversy with the newspapers and news media involved. I have been reasonably diligent in attention to my legislative duties; I have taken the insults and castigations of my critics in my stride and in the best humor I could muster. I have endeavored to be courteous and cooperative with all representatives of news media with whom I have come in contact.

No man is entitled to live for himself alone—and those who threaten to destroy me know this. They know that their writings grieve my 83 year old mother, and my sisters and my brother who live in Charlotte; they know that they dismay and wound the fine sensibilities of my wife and my daughters; they know that they offend my friends and delight my enemies. They also know that the most effective way to hurt me is to hurt my family.

Many valiant, fair, honorable, responsible and respectable newspaper men, radio men, television men, frequently come to my defense. These men are, as I am, dedicated to the cause of freedom, the cause of free enterprise, and the protection of the basic rights of individuals. The powerful United Press International and those of its subscribers who seek to destroy me can continue to cause my family much heartache and sorrow, and I confess that this is a grievous wound to me. But my family would not have me forsake my convictions—my people are not made from that kind of material. And if the writings of reporters and vicious editorial writers of the ilk of William King which appear daily in papers published in some of the larger cities of our State achieve success in the effort to impress upon the public mind an image of me which results in the destruction of my usefulness to our State, the sacrifice on my part and on the part of my long-suffering family will be small indeed if it serves to demonstrate to the people of North Carolina that powerful newspapers of the State, powerful news services and other news media seek by this awesome means to control the thinking of Representatives